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Prophylactic Club.—The members of this club are boys and girls between the ages of eight and twelve. They are children from the South Side and from our poorest homes. It is wonderful to see them improve under the influence of clean surroundings and clean suggestions. They are organized for a purpose. Motto: a clean mind, a clean body, and a clean El Paso. Object: improving living conditions on the South Side. Colors: green and white. A prize is offered to the child having the cleanest head, the cleanest body, the cleanest home, and to the one making the greatest effort to improve his or her condition. A prize is also offered to the child reporting the most unsanitary place. They are taught personal and home hygiene. Each member is given a toothbrush and powder and taught how to use it. I firmly believe that if you wish to improve a race or to improve living conditions you should begin with the children and better results will be obtained. Stimulate good citizenship in the child and you will have a clean city.

Quoting Dr. Henry Van Dyke: "What are you going to do, my brother-men, for this higher side of human life? What contributions are you going to make of your strength, your influence, your money, your self, to make a cleaner, fuller, happier, larger, nobler life possible for some of your fellowmen?"

Is your town investing in the American of to-morrow? ¹

**INVESTIGATION MADE BY MISS GERTRUDE BARNES,
A VISITING NURSE, FOR A COMMITTEE ON PRE-
VENTION, OF SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING THE
INTEREST OF THE BLIND, CLEVELAND, OHIO**

IN making this report to you it is not necessary to review the history of midwifery or point out the many reasons for its existence, but rather to bring before you some of the methods and circumstances under which it is being practised in our own city. A little explanation of how the midwives' names were obtained and how their histories were taken may make clearer what follows. We are indebted to the Board of Health for its list of registered and unregistered midwives, to Dr. Hammond for another list, and to several of the visiting nurses as well as to the midwives themselves.

Each midwife was called upon in her own home, and unless she was there, no history was taken. Her own statement as to her nationality, ability to read and write, and general care of her patient was accepted.

¹ An interesting statistical report is omitted from lack of space.—ED.

Her bag and its contents were only noted when inspected, and her diploma and license were counted when seen.

The list from the Board of Health contains 134 names, of which 56 are registered, 53 unregistered, and 25 uncertain. The other list often repeats those names already in the City Hall, but seven have been seen who are not registered and evidently are not sending birth certificates to the City Hall.

Ninety-one histories have been taken. Nationalities represented as follows: 21 German, 18 Hungarian, 14 Bohemian, 11 Austrian, 11 Slavish, 10 Polish, 3 Italian, 2 Russian-Jew, 1 Irish.

Of this number, 75 read and write a foreign language; 5 read and write English; 10 can neither read or write any language; 1 can read (but not write) English; 32 speak English (for the most part poorly); 21 have Ohio State license; 23 have Probate Court license; 47 have no license (16 of whom have no sign); 46 have foreign diplomas; 13 have diplomas from United States (8 of these from a Cleveland school).

Of the City Hall list of 134: Registered 56, 5 have moved and could not be located, 1 has died, 11 have new addresses. Unregistered 53: 1 could not be located, 1 has moved out of the city, 8 are licensed, 17 have new addresses, 3 are listed under the wrong names. Uncertain listing 25: 9 have state license, 5 have been listed before under other names, 3 have new addresses; 23 of the 134 have not been visited; 7 unregistered have been seen who are not on the City list.

Of the 91 midwives whose histories have been taken, 17 have practised 30 years or more, 36 have practised 20 years or more, 13 have practised 10 years or less.

After these midwives begin to practise they have no further instruction or supervision and have to use their own judgment. How much can a midwife of 40 or 30 or even 20 years ago know about modern asepsis and antisepsis?

Fifty-one of these women say that they do not use any medicine in the baby's eyes. Some who are using drugs use borax, "a little camphor water," salt water, Dr. Thomas' celebrated eye water, etc. Most of the midwives know enough to report "sore" eyes to a physician, but some have a very poor understanding of the real meaning of infected eyes. One old woman said, "In all her practice she has had only two cases and they were nine days old"; another said, "Some doctor from Columbus told her to let him know if babies had sore eyes but she has not had any yet."

Our State requires the midwife to report to the City Hall all births at which she is in attendance, but one midwife who cannot read or write and is without a diploma or license, when asked about birth certificate

blanks said she had none but she always told her priest about new-born babies. Another, who cannot read or write English, who holds no state license and who does not have a sign on her house, had her husband explain how they wrote in the answers on the birth blanks, and later took them to one of two physicians of their own nationality, who puts his signature to the certificates before sending them to the City Hall.

At present some of the most illiterate and least qualified women, without any diploma, hold old probate court license allowing them to practise midwifery on the same basis with the more recently-trained and state-licensed women. We are informed that within our own city we have a school of midwifery, graduating midwives after a course of instruction varying in time from four lectures of one hour each to a term of six months.

One woman reports that soon after coming to Cleveland she advertised as a midwife in a local paper; that then the physician in charge of the Cleveland School of Midwifery sent a woman who spoke her language to tell her to come to see him, which she did. This midwife has Budapest and Roumanian diplomas dated 1905 and her outfit is very neat and complete. This physician told her she could not practise without a state license and also that she could "learn by him." She arranged to take his course, which in her case was four lectures of one hour each. In her own words, she "learned just from the book, no practice." Later he advised and arranged for her to go to Indianapolis, to take the state examination. After passing these examinations the state board wrote to ask where she expected to locate in Indiana. She had not planned to leave Cleveland, but upon the same doctor's advice she went into Indiana again for a few days, he having written the state board as to where to send her license. She said she had to go to the town to "get her paper and to swear." For this instruction and advice she says she paid \$25.00. A number of the later graduates of the Cleveland School of Midwifery have been sent into other states to take the examinations.

We are largely responsible for the type of midwife who is practising among our foreign people. The midwife comes to our country with her European diploma and a good bag containing two thin trays which telescope and hold all her equipment—glass tips, bath and clinical thermometers, scissors, tape in a small metal case, an enamel fountain syringe, bottles with their labels burned into the glass, hand brush, nail file, etc.; she comes without a knowledge of our written or spoken language, so naturally locates among her own people. She puts out her sign and is ready for work. She hears that she must have a license but almost at the same time she learns that her neighbor who has a large

practice has no "paper" and so she thinks it useless or, if she is timid, she seeks advice from a local physician who speaks her language; she gets good advice or bad, but more often indifferent. If she wishes to get the state license she must have some one to advise her and to whom can she go? Sometimes she is told that she *must* take the examination in English, again she is sent to some adjoining state where she can take it in her own language, and, through carelessness, she is sometimes sent to Columbus when the examinations are to be in Cincinnati. She tries once more to practise without a license, which she knows is illegal. After a time she discards her European bag, because it is not like the one used here, and in its place she gets a cheap small one and transfers part of her equipment to it. Later the rubber douche bag and rubber tips replace the enamel and glass ones, her bottles are broken and it costs too much to keep them filled. Gradually she grows more and more careless and in a few years a small hand-bag or a piece of newspaper will carry all she needs to take with her in her practice—scissors and string!

While our state permits the practice of midwifery could the law not be enforced and make it possible for only the best midwives to practice, thus conserving many lives and lessening much suffering?

ITEMS

ELLA P. CRANDALL, of the Department of Nursing and Health of Columbia University, addressed the nurses of the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium, Dispensary Department, Chicago, during her recent short visit in that city, her subject being "The Present Course in Teachers College for Nurses" and her description of the work and its opportunities so interested the nurses that several of them are considering taking the course another year.

The following additions have been made to the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium staff: Bertha Michel, West Side Hospital, Chicago; Ethel E. Ennis, Wesley Hospital, Chicago; Mabelle Smith, West Side Hospital, Chicago; Amanda L. Holtje, German Hospital, Chicago; and Mary C. Wright, West Side Hospital, Chicago. Agnes P. McCleery, West Side Hospital, has resigned from the staff in order to take up private nursing. She was given a dinner by the visiting tuberculosis nurses on her last night in the work, who in this way showed in some small part their appreciation of her work and her companionship, and their regret at her change of activities.

Cora C. Hawson, Streeter Hospital, Chicago, formerly of the Chicago Visiting Nurses' Association, has accepted the position of Visiting Tuberculosis Nurse in Springfield, Ill.